(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether any efforts are being made to have bilateral agreements with foreign countries to deal with cyber-crimes committed from foreign lands but affecting India;

(f) if so, the status thereof; and

(g) whether there is any proposal to bring cyber-cafes and SMS messages under the existing laws to tackle the cyber-crimes?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI SU. THIRUNAVUKKARASAR): (a) to (d) In order to fight Cyber Terrorism and other attacks on computer networks, a specialized cell called Cyber Crime Investigation Cell has been formed, in the CBI.

The Government has initiated steps to Explore possibilities of intercepting SMS, e-mails, which could lead to cyber-related crimes etc.

(e) and (f) Cyber Crime Investigation cell of CBI has been made a 24 hour contact point by Interpol for reporting Cyber Crimes in India. CBI has also become a member of "Cyber Crime Technology Information Sharing Network" created by National Police Agency, Japan.

(g) Cyber Crimes committed using Cyber Cafes and SMS messages etc. are already covered under the provisions of existing laws which have been further supplemented by provisions in IT Act 2000.

Opportunities in IT and Communications

2345. PROF. M. SANKARALINGAM : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the country is fully exploiting the opportunities offered by the Information Technology and Communication sectors;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor;

(d) where does India stand in the Information Technology and Communications sector as of now; and

(e) the innovative steps taken or to be taken to improve these sectors to help the common man to reap more benefits?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI SU. THIRUNAVUKKARASAR): (a) Yes, Sir. The exploitation of ICT opportunities is an on-going process and the country is fully geared to exploit opportunities of ICT developments.

(b) The Indian software industry is likely to achieve a turnover of Rs. 60,000 crores during 2002-03.

As on 31st January 2003, 511.34 lakhs telephone connections were working in the country.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) India has the second largest telecom network in Asia after China and the seventh largest in the world.

(e) Innovative steps are regularly taken to improve the telecom sector to help the common man to reap more or rich benefits by suitable technological up gradation of telecom network from time to time.

Funds for Telecom Network

2346. PROF. M.M. AGARWAL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the funds allocated/released/utilized during the last three years for promotion, development, expansion and upgradation of telecommunication networks in the rural areas of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Orissa, Uttaranchal, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh and North-Eastern Region;

(b) whether Government have made any plan for development, expansion and upgradation of telecommunication systems in the rural areas of these States; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?